



bobcat

Lynx rufus

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Chordata - vertebrates
Class: Mammalia
Order: Carnivora
Family: Felidae

Features

The bobcat is 23 to 50 inches long, including a short (bobbed) tail of four to eight inches. It weighs between ten and 30 pounds. It has a short, broad face set off by a slight ruff on the sides of the face extending from the ears to the lower jaw. It has prominent pointed ears, sometimes with small one inch tufts. It has five toes on the front feet and four on the back, all with long sharp claws that can be extended or retracted. The upper parts and side of its fur are yellowish to reddish brown, streaked, and spotted with black, while the underparts are white with black spots and indefinite broken bars.

Natural History

The bobcat lives in timber cover, underbrush, and rock outcroppings along river and stream valley corridors. It is active at night foraging for small mammals and birds. It is a good climber and often uses trees as shelter from dogs or for resting and observation. The bobcat depends more upon its keen eyesight and hearing than its sense of smell while locating prey. It can kill game as large as deer by biting the throat at the jugular vein. Mating begins in January and may extend into early June. The gestation period is 50 to 70 days. Litter size is one to five. Young

stay with the female until fall. Some females mate at age one.

Habitats

bottomland forests

Iowa Status

endangered; native

Loss of woodland habitats and persecution of this predator have greatly reduced numbers, but increased sightings indicate it is becoming more common.

Iowa Range

eastern and western edges of Iowa and southern two-thirds

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.